



Stanford eCorner

Driving Forces in Ed-Tech

Jennifer Carolan, *New Schools Seed Fund*

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Jennifer Carolan, co-founder and managing director of the NewSchools Seed Fund, explains the need-finding process that precedes and determines which ed-tech ideas get funded. In conversation with serial entrepreneur and Stanford course instructor Steve Blank, Carolan also points out that the increasing demand for technology in K-12 classrooms is largely driven by younger teachers.



Transcript

Our fund is really need-driven, thesis-driven. So we ask our teachers, we ask our school leaders what's preventing you from - what's preventing your students from reaching high levels of student achievement. And then they will tell us, this is what we need, we need a better way for teachers to share lesson plans, we need a better way for students, for teachers to be trained on the spot and we will go out looking for those solutions. So before we go through some of those solutions which I want to hear about... Yeah. ...you said something earlier that I thought was really interesting is that the adoption of new technologies has accelerated in the last couple of years in schools. Is that true? Absolutely, yeah. And what is - what's driving that or is it legislation, is it iPads, is it something, is it it's now time where the students have more tech than the schools have. I mean... Yeah.

There is quite a few factors. I think one is that, I would say, this ed-tech revolution has been led by the teachers and they are the ones adopting these solutions, bringing them into their classrooms and using them. That's a big idea. Why do you think that is? Well, 40% of U.S. teachers and there is 4 million U.S. teachers... Wow. ...are under the age of 30. So they are young. They have grown up with technology.

I see. And this is the way -- they are banking online, they are shopping online, they come to school and they get - in most schools, this is what you get your file cabinet, your textbook and your paper grater and they are saying, no way, we want technology tools that are as good as our consumer technology tools.